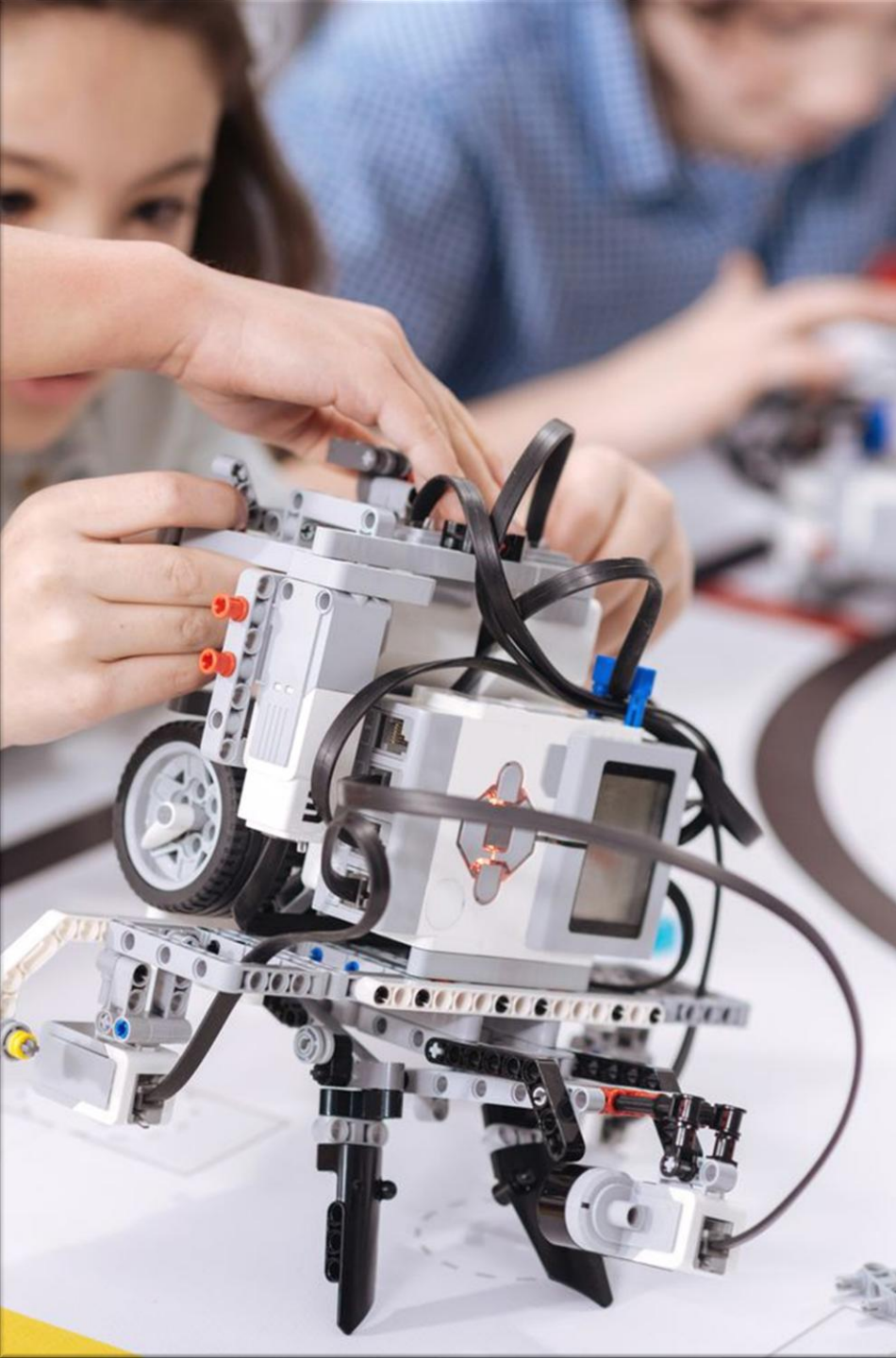


**2024 IEEE WISC Scholarship
Program Awardees**

**2024 IEEE WISC Scholarship
Program Chair
Lorraine M. Herger**

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About the IEEE WISC Scholarship

- Begun in 2021, the program awards scholarships to deserving female students pursuing technical educations.
- Both graduate and undergraduate students are considered for the scholarships.
- Applicants are judged based on their technical interests, career goals, and contributions to the STEM community.

The 2024 WISC Scholarship Applicants

- Total of 56 Applicants
 - 16 Phd Students
 - 11 Ms Students
 - 29 Bs Students
- Worldwide Applicant Pool: Africa, Americas, Asia, Australia, Europe
- Focus Areas: Quantum Computing, Computer Science, Data Science, Electrical Engineering, Security, etc.
- 15 Scholarships awarded

Decision making by the committee was extremely difficult. All the students have impressive resumes, along with their commitments to volunteer activities in support of their communities. Our goal is to continue to expand the program, to award more scholarships in the future!

Judges

Lorraine M. Herger, Chair, IBM Research, TJ Watson Research Center, US

Shubhi Asthana, IBM Research, Almaden Research Center, US

Houda Chakiri, Al Akhawayn University Ifrane, Morocco

Ruchi Mahindra, IBM Research, Yorktown, NY Research Center, US

Manar AbuTalib, University of Sharjah, UAE

Jordan Murray, IBM Research, J Watson Research Center, US

**The 2024 IEEE
WISC
Scholarship
Awardees**

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Meriem Aoudia

Meriem Aoudia is preparing to pursue a full-time Master of Science in Machine Learning starting in Fall 2024. She graduated with honors from the University of Sharjah, earning a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science. Meriem has explored quantum computing applications at New York University Abu Dhabi and conducted research on blockchain applications in energy trading with the OpenUAE Research & Development Group. Her dedication to advancing computing is evident through her contributions in different fields of computer science. As a previous STEM Certified Trainer and an undergraduate teaching assistant, Meriem empowered learners, demonstrating her commitment to education. She has been a highly active student, participating in numerous hackathons, competitions, and events, showcasing her passion for practical application and innovation in technology. Meriem looks forward to leveraging her skills and scholarship to make substantial contributions to the field of machine learning.



Hajar Sadok

Hajar is a junior college student at Al Akhawayn University pursuing a degree in management and engineering science. On campus, she is dedicated to helping students succeed as a tutor for engineering courses and actively participates in the Al Qalb Al Kbir (Big Heart) club, organizing medical campaigns and fundraising events.

As a member of this club, she has been deeply involved in community service and fostering empathy. Notably, Hajar led a project to develop a seismic detector and a hybrid drone inspired both by the aftermath of the Morocco earthquake on September 8, 2023. Passionate about sustainable engineering practices and innovative technologies, she aims to break barriers for women in engineering.



Niloofar Sharifisadr

Niloofar Sharifisadr is a MSc student in Software Engineering at the University of Calgary, specializing in the use of AI in performance analysis of cloud servers. She completed her Bachelors and Master's degree in Computer Engineering, specializing in artificial intelligence, with the highest honors, at the University of Tehran. She engaged deeply with complex challenges in data analysis, machine learning and pattern recognition to study belief revision in social media for her research. Currently, she is working as a teaching and research assistant with University of Calgary. Inspired by the potential to apply her knowledge on a larger scale, she is now exploring the cutting-edge intersection of Generative AI with software engineering and cloud performance. In her research, she is addressing significant challenges in the application of generative adversarial networks (GANs) to time-series data, specifically within cloud computing contexts. While GANs have achieved notable success in image generation, their application to time-series data remains under-explored, particularly for cloud-based applications. This gap is crucial because effective synthetic data generation can drastically improve the testing and scaling of cloud services, which are integral to modern cloud infrastructures.

Ommo Clark

Ommo Clark is a PhD student at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), where her research focuses on leveraging knowledge graphs, semantic reasoning, and NLP to combat misinformation in online health information. Her work aims to empower individuals with reliable health information and improve health outcomes. It also contributes to advancing the field of trustworthy health information retrieval and knowledge representation. She won the UMBC COEIT 2024 PhD Research Poster Award. Ommo is an accomplished technology entrepreneur and IT professional, having founded iBez Consulting Ltd., a software company that successfully delivered projects across diverse sectors in Nigeria. Notably, she developed Handy-Jacks, a platform connecting tradespeople with clients in Nigeria, contributing to job creation and skill development. Ommo is passionate about empowering women in technology and actively mentors aspiring entrepreneurs and startups through organizations like the Founder Institute Lagos and She Leads Africa. She is a member of several professional organizations, including Women in Data Science Worldwide, the Nigeria Internet Registration Association, and the Institute of Software Professionals of Nigeria. Ommo holds an MSc in Information Systems from Brunel University, UK, and a BA (Hons) in Business Administration from London Guildhall University, UK. She is currently pursuing an internship with the Centre for Applied AI at UMBC Training Centers as an AI Engineer, further enhancing her expertise in AI, Deep Fakes and Misinformation.



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Akanksha Kale

Akanksha Kale is currently pursuing her B.Tech degree in Information Technology from MKSSS's Cummins College of Engineering for Women, Pune, maintaining a CGPA of 9.1/10. Her academic excellence is complemented by her involvement in various technical and community-oriented activities. Akanksha has successfully developed numerous projects in natural language processing, machine learning, and web development. Her technical acumen has earned her accolades such as winning the JP Morgan Code for Good 2023 Hackathon and the All-India Women's Hackathon 2023. Additionally, she was awarded the Avery Dennison Spirit of Invention Award in 2022.

In addition to her technical projects, Akanksha held leadership positions as Co-Head of the Code Club at CCOEW, where she organized coding competitions, hackathons, and mentorship programs. She is also a Student Representative at the Society of Women Engineers, Cummins chapter. Akanksha shares her knowledge through technical blogs on platforms like Hashnode. With a keen interest in AI, machine learning, and data science, she actively contributes to the tech community. She has also gained practical experience as a Software Engineering Summer Intern at JPMorgan Chase & Co.



Utkarsha Shirole

Utkarsha Shirole is currently pursuing her Master of Science in Cybersecurity at Khoury College of Computer Sciences, Northeastern University, Boston. She completed her degree in Bachelor of Technology from Dr. Vishwanath Karad's World Peace University, India while working as a Cybersecurity Engineer intern at Cognizant Solutions. Her academic contributions include a research paper on "Querying Databases using Natural Language Questions," presented at the International Conference on Intelligent Computing in Information Technology for Engineering Systems (ICICITES-2021) and published in the first edition of Intelligent Computing in Information Technology for Engineering Systems. As the first college graduate in her family, Utkarsha exemplifies dedication and intellectual curiosity, consistently striving for excellence. She has actively participated in notable conferences, including Harvard's WeCode for Women in STEM in 2024. Beyond her technical acumen, she is deeply committed to the empowerment of women in science and technology. Utkarsha co-founded the Khoury SHEROs of Color at Northeastern University, an organization supporting female graduate students, where she currently serves as President. Utkarsha's interests lie in defensive security, with aspirations to collaborate closely with government organizations to enhance global digital safety. Her goal is to create opportunities for future students in cybersecurity, fostering a new generation of professionals dedicated to protecting our digital world.

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Marwa Yacouti

Marwa is a Ph.D. candidate in the department of Aerospace Engineering Sciences at the University of Colorado Boulder. Her research focuses on predicting and understanding the mechanical behaviors of complex materials through computational modeling and machine learning. She specializes in developing deep learning techniques to predict mechanical fields in fiber-reinforced composites and constitutive modeling for multifunctional shape-memory materials. Marwa's work aims to advance structural design and optimization by integrating materials science, mechanics, and computational modeling. Marwa holds an Engineer's degree in Civil Engineering from École Hassania des Travaux Publics, Morocco (2018). She completed a dual Master's program at École des Ponts ParisTech, France, in Civil Engineering, and Materials Science Engineering (2019). She also earned a Master's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Virginia Tech, USA (2022). Marwa's diverse academic background highlights her dedication to interdisciplinary studies and her commitment to advancing her expertise in engineering and computational modeling. In 2024, Marwa was selected as one of the Rising Stars in Computational and Data Sciences by the Oden Institute for Computational Engineering and Sciences.

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Emily Portalatín-Méndez

As a proactive and lifelong scholar, Emily is currently pursuing her undergraduate studies in Computer Science at City University of New York - Lehman College and will graduate from Lehman in May 2025. With a passion for emerging technologies, she has made significant contributions to the field by publishing two essays on artificial intelligence. She has explored topics such as deep learning's application of biomimicry and the utilization of large-language models for urban narrative extraction. Her independent research focuses on innovating and implementing software engineering methodologies within the realm of design science. She is also an active participant in community outreach programs, volunteering her time to mentor aspiring technologists and promote STEM education in underrepresented communities. Additionally, Emily is a fervent advocate for diversity and inclusion in the tech industry, regularly engaging in initiatives that foster a more equitable and welcoming environment for all. With eight years of hands-on experience, she has successfully tackled challenges in tech, cyber security, fintech, logistics, and government sectors. Her dedication extends beyond technical prowess; she is driven by a dual mission: to solve real-world problems and advocate for gender equality in computer science. Emily's journey exemplifies her commitment to making a positive impact through technology while championing the representation of women in STEM fields.



Meera Alex

I'm a PhD student in Biosciences & Bioengineering program at American University of Sharjah. Currently, I am engaged in synthesizing and characterizing flexible and implantable bioelectrodes. My expertise includes conducting human subject, laboratory research studies, data analysis and interpretation, development and implementation of research tools, project management, teamwork, time management, problem solving, and multitasking project design. I enjoy generating new ideas and devising feasible solutions to broadly relevant problems. These competencies are applied and valued based on my education, work experience, and volunteer work throughout the years. My colleagues would describe me as a driven, resourceful individual who maintains a positive, proactive attitude when faced with adversity. I eagerly anticipate exciting opportunities in the realms of engineering and research.



Yutong Qu

Yutong Qu is a PhD student in computer science at the University of Adelaide, Australia, specializing in computational linguistics, with a focus on advancing knowledge-aware approaches for natural language processing tasks, particularly text summarization. She also serves an academic teaching assistant in statistical machine learning and applied natural language processing, as well as a guest lecturer in applied natural language processing at the University of Adelaide. Her research interests encompass artificial intelligence, natural language processing, text summarization, multi-modal learning, knowledge-aware approaches, and data services.



Huda Abualola

Huda Abualola, a 29-year-old PhD student in computer engineering at Khalifa University, Abu Dhabi and a loving mother for two kids. She is a passionate researcher who has been working on several research topics for the past 6 years including electric vehicles V2V charging, Vehicular Ad-hoc Networks (VANET), Mesh Networks and crowdsourcing. Proudly, her h-index is 6 in Scopus and Google Scholar by publishing a total of 8 research papers in Q1 journals and international conferences including Vehicular Communications, Journal of Network and Computer Applications. She is also an active reviewer in prestigious journals including Ad Hoc Networks, and IEEE Transactions on Network and Service Management. In addition to research, she is an enthusiastic and dedicated teaching assistant for computer networks and computer security courses. Besides academic achievements, she participated in the gulf programming contest in 2014 and 2015 and won Abu Dhabi undergraduate research assistant competition in 2016. In 2018 and 2019 she served as an expert in the Emirates Technology and Innovation Competition for the Cyber Security Category. Recently, in 2023 she has been an active organizer for Metaversity Hackathon Competition that is sponsored by Khalifa university and Microsoft. Her ultimate goal is to be a role model for her kids and every woman showing that they can be successful mothers and engineers

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Kamar Tahri Joutei

At 21, Kamar Tahri Joutei is a recent graduate of Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco, with a Bachelor of Engineering and Management Science and a thematic area in Finance. Driven by a desire to leverage AI for transformative change in finance, she is set to pursue a Master's in Risk Management and Financial Engineering at Imperial College London. Kamar's leadership potential shines through her extensive extracurricular involvement. As Vice President of Membership Experience at AIESEC in Ifrane, she secured 1st place in a national hackathon for best performance in Outgoing Global Volunteering. Her dedication to social good led her to lead the 2nd most active Humanitarian Club at Yo Soy Joy where she was the President and served as Vice President for the 3rd most active club at Hand in Hand. Her commitment extends to professional experience. She has balanced her studies with several part-time jobs such as research assistant, data analyst, mentor, and resident assistant roles. Additionally, she gained valuable industry exposure through internships at Huawei and CDG. Through her academic pursuits, leadership roles, and practical experience, Kamar is poised to reach her full potential in AI and apply it in the world of Finance.

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Safia Saeed Mohamed

Safia Saeed Mohamed is currently pursuing an M.Sc. in Data Science at the University of Sharjah. She received a Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering with honors from the American University of Ras Al Khaimah. Safia is working as a Graduate Research Assistant in the Big Data Mining and Multimedia research group. She is particularly interested in medical data mining, medical image analysis, machine learning, optimization, and statistics. Safia is an energetic, creative individual passionate about leveraging data-driven approaches to solve complex real-life problems and deploy innovative solutions that positively impact society. Safia works logically and rationally, making her a unique problem solver. She is intuitive and perceptive to people, which makes her an excellent team player. During her academic journey, she has participated in multiple extracurricular activities such as presenting in forums, organizing conferences, competing in GITEX competitions, and participating in IEEE meetings, conferences, and events. She is dedicated to excellently representing African women in data science, breaking barriers, and inspiring others. Additionally, Safia served as an academic tutor for programming courses for two years, further honing her leadership and teaching abilities. These experiences have shaped her personality, organizational, teamwork, and leadership skills.



Khadija Ajabboune

Khadija Ajabboune is a senior at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, studying engineering and management science. She has a passion for using her knowledge to make a positive impact academically and within her community. Her curiosity took her to SIUC in the USA for a semester, where she gained valuable insights and experiences in engineering. Khadija has interned at Dachser Logistics and IT Services AUI as a data analytics intern, applying her skills in real-world settings. She has also served as a teaching assistant for two engineering courses, where she enjoys sharing her knowledge with others. Beyond her academic pursuits, Khadija has actively volunteered with Hand in Hand AUI, Moroccan Politics Club AUI, and Girl Up Morocco, contributing to important causes. She has held the role of vice president of the AUI IEEE student branch and was part of the AI summer school design team at Al Akhawayn University in 2023, organized by Morocco AI.

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Hager Mohamed Khalil

Hager Khalil is an accomplished biomedical engineer in Abu Dhabi, known for her contributions to healthcare technology and academic excellence. Currently pursuing her bachelor's degree at Abu Dhabi University with a CGPA of 3.95, she has been accepted into her master's program for fall 2024/2025. Hager specializes in developing cutting-edge medical devices, focusing on AI technologies to enhance diagnostic systems. As a Research Consultant at Mubadala, she leads the development of a cross-platform AI-powered dietary recommendation app, offering comprehensive nutritional and pharmaceutical guidance. Additionally, she works as a Course Assistant at Abu Dhabi University, supporting classroom management and student success. Hager's dedication is reflected in her numerous awards, including first place in the Annual Biomedical Device Design Competition and recognition for her AI model predicting diabetes, hypertension, and stroke. Fluent in Arabic and English, she brings a global perspective to her work, along with strong skills in Python, MATLAB, and mobile app development. Her capstone project, a wheelchair-agnostic AI-based controller, showcases her innovative approach and commitment to improving patient care through technology.